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Examiner: Jacques VEILLARD
Group Art Unit: 2165
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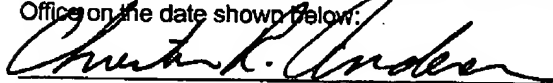
FORMAL SUBMISSION OF:

- 1) Transmittal Letter; and 2) Appeal Brief.

Title: PARSING OF NESTED INTERNET ELECTRONIC MAIL DOCUMENTS
Serial No. 09/941,105
Filing Date: August 28, 2001
First Named Inventor: John F. BUFORD
Atty. No. 01-8001

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TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF			Docket No. 01-8001
In re Application of: John F. Buford et al.			
Application No. 09/941,105	Filing Date August 28, 2001	Examiner Veillard, Jacques	Group Art Unit 2165
Invention: PARSING OF NESTED INTERNET ELECTRONIC MAIL DOCUMENTS			
<u>TO THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS:</u>			
Transmitted herewith is the Appeal Brief in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed: <u>April 5, 2005</u>			
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Joel Wall Attorney for Applicant Registration No.: 25,648 Verizon Corporate Services Group, Inc. c/o Christian Andersen 600 Hidden Ridge Drive, Mailcode HQE03H14 Irving, TX 75038 972-718-4800 CUSTOMER NO.: 32127		Dated: <u>June 6, 2005</u>	
<div style="text-align: center;">Appeal Brief Transmittal</div> <div>I hereby certify that this correspondence is, on the date shown below, being transmitted by facsimile to the United States Patent Office at 703-872-9306.</div> <div>Dated: June 8, 2005</div> <div>Signature <u>Christian Andersen</u> (Christian Andersen)</div>			

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In the Patent Application of:
John F. Buford et al.

Application No.: 09/941,105

Filed: August 28, 2001

For: PARSING OF NESTED INTERNET
ELECTRONIC MAIL DOCUMENTS

Group Art Unit: 2165

Examiner: Veillard, Jacques

APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This is an Appeal Brief under Rule 41.37 appealing the final decision of the Examiner dated December 8, 2004. Each of the topics required by Rule 41.37 is presented herewith and is labeled appropriately.

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I. Real Party in Interest

The real party in interest is Verizon Laboratories Inc., Assignee, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of Delaware, and having a place of business at 40 Sylvan Road, Waltham, MA 02451.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no appeals or interferences related to the present application of which the Appellants are aware.

III. Status of Claims

Claims 27-52 are currently pending in the application and all stand finally rejected. Appellants appeal from the final rejection of these claims, which are presented in the Claims Appendix.

IV. Status of Amendments

There are no outstanding after-final amendments to the claims, and claims 27-52 stand rejected for purposes of this appeal.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

Appellants' disclosure provides systems and methods for processing complaints, especially complaints related to unwanted emails. When a user receives an unwanted email such as an unsolicited commercial email ("UCE") or other form of spam, the user may send a complaint about the unwanted email to a service provider (e.g., an Internet service provide ("ISP")) that employs the present systems and methods. As frequently happens, the user can

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conveniently attach the unwanted email to a complaint, thereby forming a complaint having the unwanted email nested therein. Accordingly, complaints may have various structures, including one or more concatenated (i.e., nested) email messages in which an original unwanted email is the innermost email message (H3, B3) nested in the complaint. For example, see Figure 2(a) of Appellants' drawings, in which H3 is the header and B3 is the body of the innermost nested email message in the complaint. (Figure 2(a); and page 5, line 28 through page 6, line 18 of Appellants' specification.)

A complaint containing one or more nested email messages may be received and parsed by an ISP help desk running an application that employs the present systems and methods. An analysis is performed on the structure of the complaint by parsing nested electronic email documents contained in the complaint. The parsing of the complaint includes breaking up nested email messages into components by looping through email headers (H1, H2, and H3) to separate each header and body (H3, B3), (H2, B2), (H1, B1) of the nested email messages. In this manner, the structure of the complaint can be recorded and analyzed. (Page 3, lines 19-22; and page 8, line 27 through page 9, line 7 of Appellants' specification.)

The parsed headers are analyzed to locate information (e.g., a source identifier) related to the unwanted email nested in the complaint. In particular, the present systems and methods loop through the headers of nested email messages and analyze the lines of the headers to determine whether header keywords can be used to detect the beginning of the innermost header (H3). Header keywords are normalized by removing extra spaces and blank lines within the headers. Headers are validated, and the last validated header contained in the complaint can be extracted and used to identify an actual source of the innermost nested email (i.e., the unwanted email). In particular, an innermost Received line (63) of the innermost

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header (H3) can be used to verify the source IP address or other information associated with the unwanted email. Other information contained in the nested emails may also be analyzed and used to process complaints about unwanted email messages. (Figures 6(a) and 6(b); and page 9, line 13 through page 11, line 2 of Appellants' specification.)

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

In the final Office Action, the following rejections were made:

(A) Claims 27, 35-37, 45-48, 51, and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,581,105 to Miloslavsky et al. (hereinafter "Miloslavsky").

(B) Claims 28-34, 38-44, 49, and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miloslavsky in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,321,267 to Donaldson (hereinafter "Donaldson").

Accordingly, the issues presented in this appeal are:

- (1) Whether claims 27, 35-37, 45-48, 51, and 52 are patentable over Miloslavsky.
- (2) Whether claims 28-34, 38-44, 49, and 50 are patentable over the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson.

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VII. Argument

The Examiner's Failure to Address Several of Appellants' Arguments

In the Amendment dated September 30, 2004, Appellants presented numerous arguments for the patentability of several dependent claims, including claims 30-35 and 39-45. Unfortunately, the Final Office Action does not contain any response to the arguments associated with claims 30-35 and 39-45. In Appellants' response to the Final Office Action, filed on February 8, 2005, Appellants expressly requested that the Examiner address Appellants' traversals of the rejections of claims 30-35 and 39-45 (pages 9 and 10 of Appellants' response to the Final Office Action filed February 8, 2005). However, the Advisory Action dated March 4, 2005 contains nothing more than a general pleading that "the examiner has provided a [sic] substantial evidence as to where each limitations [sic] of the claimed language are [sic] meet [sic] in the prior art" (page 2 of the Advisory Action).

MPEP 707.07(f) states that "[w]here the applicant traverses any rejection, the examiner should, if he or she repeats the rejection, take note of the applicant's argument and answer the substance of it." While a discussion on the merits for the patentability of the claims is presented below, the failure of the Examiner to address Appellants' traversals of the rejections of numerous claims should in and of itself necessitate reversal of the rejections of at least dependent claims 30-35 and 39-45.

Issue 1: §102(e) Rejections of Claims 27, 35-37, 45-48, 51, and 52

On page 4 of the final Office Action dated December 8, 2004 (hereinafter the "Final Office Action"), the Examiner rejected claims 27, 35-37, 45-48, 51, and 52 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Miloslavsky. "A claim is anticipated only if each and every

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element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 2 U.S.P.Q.2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). See M.P.E.P. § 2131. For the reasons discussed below, Miloslavsky fails to meet this requirement because each and every claim element recited in claims 27, 35-37, 45-48, 51, and 52 is not disclosed in Miloslavsky. Therefore, Appellants respectfully request reversal of the rejections of these claims.

A. Independent Claims 27, 37, 46, and 51

Independent claim 27 recites in part the steps of:

...retrieving a complaint from a complainant about an incident over the computer network;
parsing the complaint into a plurality of components, wherein the step of parsing includes breaking up an electronic mail message nested in the complaint into the plurality of components;.... (Emphasis added.)

Similarly, independent claims 37 and 51 recite the claim limitation of breaking up an electronic mail message nested in the complaint. Independent claim 46 recites a similar claim limitation of a message parser being adapted to break a message nested in the complaint into a plurality of message components. Miloslavsky fails to disclose the claim limitation of breaking up an electronic mail message nested in a complaint because the teachings of Miloslavsky assume only one message authored and sent by one sender, and consequently the purposes of Miloslavsky would be defeated for emails including multiple nested email messages each having its own header and body, as discussed below.

On page 4 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner equates the email message disclosed in Miloslavsky with the claim limitation of a complaint as recited in claims 27 and 37. The Examiner then inconsistently equates the same email message of Miloslavsky with the electronic mail message nested in the complaint, as recited in the independent claims. (page 4 of the Final Office Action). This duplicative and inconsistent interpretation of a

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single email message authored and sent by a single sender, as disclosed in Miloslavsky, cannot reasonably be used to reject both claim limitations of retrieving a complaint and breaking up an electronic mail message nested in the complaint because a single email message is not in any way a disclosure of both a complaint and an email message nested in the complaint.

Because Miloslavsky discloses no more than a single email message containing information from a single source, the Examiner's interpretation of Miloslavsky is clearly incorrect. Miloslavsky discloses a call center that receives an email message from a customer (Abstract of Miloslavsky). The email message is parsed at the call center to extract addresses, timestamps, or keywords (Abstract and col. 36, lines 65 through col. 37, line 4 of Miloslavsky). The extracted information (e.g., keywords) is then matched with predefined criteria (e.g., predetermined keywords), which are associated with particular skill sets of customer service agents (Abstract of Miloslavsky). Through this process, the email message can be routed to a particular customer service agent having skills helpful for responding to service requirements contained in the email message (Abstract of Miloslavsky). Thus, the parsing disclosed in Miloslavsky is performed on a single email message from a single source and not having nested email messages therein, as evidenced by independent claims 1 and 9 of Miloslavsky, which recite the parsing of "the message body of the email, as originally authored by the sender, for keywords or phrases" (col. 39, lines 38-40 and col. 40, lines 11-13 of Miloslavsky, emphasis added). There simply is no disclosure in Miloslavsky of parsing an email message having another email message nested therein, much less a disclosure of one or more nested email messages that were created and sent by a source other than the source of the top-level email.

Accordingly, if the teachings of Miloslavsky were applied to a complaint having a

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nested email message therein, only information related to the first (i.e., the top level) header and body would be found. Clearly, the methods of Miloslavsky would fail to locate or even consider information contained in an innermost nested email message. Thus, the methods of Miloslavsky are incapable of identifying information (e.g., a source identifier) related to an unwanted email message when the unwanted email message is nested within a complaint email message.

On page 2 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner cites column 37, lines 4-6 of Miloslavsky: "The extraction algorithm in extractor 6204 is changeable because the coding in algorithm 6208 could be changed." Inasmuch as the Examiner may be relying upon the changeability of the parsing algorithm of Miloslavsky to somehow disclose the claim limitation of breaking up an electronic mail message nested in a complaint, the simple ability to change the extraction algorithm of Miloslavsky does not in any way equate to a disclosure of breaking up a nested email message, especially in light of the complete absence in Miloslavsky of any teaching or suggestion of a nested email message. Based on the teachings of Miloslavsky, Appellants understand the changeability of the extraction algorithm to indicate no more than an ability to select the information that will be extracted from a single email message not having email messages nested therein. For example, the call center may change the particular keywords that will be extracted from the body of the email (see col. 37, lines 1-6 and col. 39, lines 38-41 of Miloslavsky). Thus, the changeability of the parsing algorithm does not in any way amount to a disclosure of the claim limitation of breaking up an electronic email message nested in a complaint.

The Examiner offers a second and inconsistent interpretation of Miloslavsky on page 2 of the Final Office Action, where the Examiner asserts that Miloslavsky discloses "a parser for parsing the content of the e-mails obtained from the e-mail server in order to extract [an]

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embedded complaint in [sic] a plurality of components....” (Emphasis added.) The relevant claim limitation of claims 27, 37, 46, and 51 recites an electronic mail message nested in a complaint, not a complaint nested in an email message. Therefore, the Examiner’s second interpretation of Miloslavsky, even if somehow correct, would still not disclose the claim limitation of an electronic mail message nested in a complaint. Moreover, this interpretation of Miloslavsky is not only incorrect, it is also inconsistent with the Examiner’s interpretation of Miloslavsky discussed above, and as presented on page 4 of the Final Office Action. Because Miloslavsky discloses no more than a parsing of a single email message from a single source, neither interpretation of Miloslavsky presented in the Final Office Action is correct.

For the foregoing reasons, Miloslavsky fails to disclose each and every limitation recited in independent claims 27, 37, 46, and 51 because the reference does not disclose the claim limitation of breaking up an electronic mail message nested in a complaint. Therefore, the rejections of independent claims 27, 37, 46, and 51 should not be sustained.

B. Dependent Claims 36, 47, 48, and 52

Each of the dependent claims 36, 47, 48, and 52 depends, directly or indirectly, from one of the independent claims 27, 46, and 51. Therefore, for the same reasons discussed above in relation to the independent claims, the rejection of these dependent claims should not be sustained.

C. Dependent Claims 35 and 45

The rejections of dependent claims 35 and 45 should not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from independent claims 27 and 37, respectively. Nevertheless, claims 35 and 45 also recite independently patentable subject matter. Claim 35 recites:

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35. The method of Claim 27, wherein the extracted information comprises one of a complaint tracking code, a source IP address, a Received Line, a First Line, a URL, and a body of one of the plurality of components.

Claim 45 recites similar claim limitations.

On page 5 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies upon column 11, lines 17-27 and column 12, lines 15-20 of Miloslavsky to reject claims 35 and 45. These sections of Miloslavsky disclose the use of a URL to enable a browser to access a particular web page but do not disclose a URL that is extracted information. Moreover, the parsed addresses disclosed in Miloslavsky are limited to sender and recipient email addresses (col. 37, lines 7-9 of Miloslavsky). Accordingly, Miloslavsky fails to disclose an extracted URL as asserted by the Examiner, and the rejections of claims 35 and 45 should not be sustained.

Issue 2: §103(a) Rejections of Claims 28-34, 38-44, 49, and 50

On page 6 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 28-34, 38-44, 49, and 50 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miloslavsky in view of Donaldson. A *prima facie* case of obviousness requires: (1) a suggestion or motivation to modify or combine the reference teachings; (2) a reasonable expectation of success; and (3) a teaching or suggestion in the prior art references of all of the claim limitations (MPEP 2143). For the reasons discussed below, the Office Action does not satisfy all of these requirements.

A. Dependent Claims 28, 29, 38, 49, and 50

In rejecting claims 28, 29, 38, 49, and 50, the Examiner suggests modifying Miloslavsky with Donaldson's teaching of locating a header message in order to reject email received from unknown hosts (pages 6 and 7 of the Final Office Action). The Final Office Action states that the modification of Miloslavsky with Donaldson would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art because "Donaldson provides a method wherein the header

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message can be located in order to reject email from unknown hosts that do not list the recipient's email address header of the message" (page 7 of the Final Office Action). For the following reasons, Appellants respectfully submit that it would not have been obvious to combine the teachings of Miloslavsky and Donaldson as asserted by the Examiner.

The Examiner states on page 3 of the Final Office Action that "there is no requirement that a motivation to make the modification be expressly articulated." In response to this statement, Appellants point to M.P.E.P. §2143.01, which, citing *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed Cir. 1992), states:

Obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art.

On pages 12 and 13 of Appellants' response to the Final Office Action, which response was filed February 8, 2005, Appellants respectfully requested that the Examiner specify any general knowledge being relied upon, as well as support for such knowledge, "[i]f the Examiner intend[ed] to rely upon knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art as the motivation for combining Miloslavsky and Donaldson." The Advisory Action does not contain any response to this request. Accordingly, Appellants interpret the Examiner's silence as an admission that knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art is not being relied upon as a motivation or suggestion for combining Miloslavsky and Donaldson.

Inasmuch as the Examiner is relying on the references themselves as providing motivation for their combination, Appellants respectfully disagree with this conclusion. As stated on page 3 of the Final Office Action, "[t]he test for combining references is what the

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combination taken as a whole would suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re McLaughlin*, 170 USPO 209 (CCPA 1971).” Further, a reference must be considered for all it teaches, including disclosures that teach away from the invention as well as disclosures that point toward the invention. *Ashland Oil, Inc. v. Delta Resins & Refractories, Inc.*, 776 F.2d 281, 227 U.S.P.Q. 657 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

One of ordinary skill in the art, upon reading either Miloslavsky or Donaldson, would not have been motivated to look to the other reference to cure any deficiencies in the first reference because Miloslavsky and Donaldson are directed to solving different problems. On one hand, Miloslavsky is directed to the routing of emails to qualified customer support agents in a call center (Abstract of Miloslavsky). In contrast, Donaldson is directed to filtering/blocking email by rejecting email received from unknown hosts (Abstract of Donaldson). The routing and the blocking of emails are two different and contrasting problems.

Moreover, Donaldson and Miloslavsky teach away from their combination because such a combination would not be desirable in the contexts described in Donaldson and Miloslavsky. To illustrate, the efficient routing of email messages to qualified call center personnel, as taught in Miloslavsky, would be compromised by adding the email blocking capabilities taught in Donaldson. Significantly, customer service provided by a call center would be unresponsive whenever emails sent by actual customers from unknown email addresses were blocked by the system of Donaldson. Thus, the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson suggested by the Examiner would impermissibly change the principles of Miloslavsky by rendering Miloslavsky’s call center ineffective in providing customer service to people whose email addresses may not be known in advance. (See M.P.E.P. § 2143.02, citing *In re Ratti*, 270 F.2d 810, 123 USPQ 349 (CCPA 1959).)

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For the foregoing reasons, Appellants respectfully submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine Miloslavsky and Donaldson as asserted in the Final Office Action. Accordingly, the Final Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness against claims 28, 29, 38, 49, and 50, and the rejections of these claims should not be sustained.

B. Dependent Claims 30 and 39

The rejections of dependent claims 30 and 39 should not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from independent claims 27 and 37 respectively, and/or from intervening claims 28 and 38 respectively. In addition, claims 30 and 39 recite independently patentable matter that is not taught or suggested in the cited prior art. "To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974)." M.P.E.P. § 2143.03. Claims 30 and 39 each recite the claim limitation of a normalizing step including a step of removing at least one character from a header based on a header keyword. Removal of characters from headers is an important part of normalizing the headers, which normalization allows nested headers to be looped through to identify the header of the innermost nested email message (see page 10, lines 13-23 of Appellants' specification). The innermost nested email is normally the unwanted email message being reported.

On page 7 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies upon the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson to reject claims 30 and 39. In particular, the Examiner cites column 2, lines 38-41 of Donaldson, which section of Donaldson discloses removing a message from a sending host device once a transmission of the message is complete (Donaldson, col. 2, lines 37-41). The removal of an entire message from the queue of a

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sending host device is entirely different from the claim limitation of normalizing by removing a character from a header. The removal of an entire message from a sending queue has nothing to do with the normalization of nested email message headers for purposes of parsing the headers. Clearly, the section of Donaldson relied upon by the Examiner does not in any way teach or disclose the claim limitation of a normalizing step including a step of removing at least one character from a header based on a header keyword, as recited in claims 30 and 39. Miloslavsky does not cure this deficiency of Donaldson because, as the Examiner appropriately admits on page 6 of the Final Office Action, Miloslavsky does not teach locating a header. Miloslavsky does not even mention the term "header."

Because Miloslavsky and Donaldson, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach every claim limitation recited in claims 30 and 39, the Final Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness against these claims. Therefore, the rejections of claims 30 and 39 should not be sustained.

C. Dependent Claims 31 and 40

The rejections of dependent claims 31 and 40 should not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from independent claims 27 and 37, respectively. In addition, claims 31 and 40 recite independently patentable matter that is not taught or suggested in the cited prior art. For example, claims 31 and 40 recite the claim limitation of locating a Received line. The locating of an innermost embedded Received line is helpful for identifying the actual source of the innermost nested email (see page 10, line 24 through page 11, line 13 of Appellants' specification).

On page 7 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies upon the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson to reject claims 31 and 40. In particular, the Examiner cites

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column 2, lines 49-61 and column 3, lines 5-14 of Donaldson, which sections of Donaldson teach that protocol messages are transferred as sequences of ASCII characters that end with a specific “newline” character (col. 2, lines 49-61 and col. 3, lines 5-14 of Donaldson). A “newline” character, as understood by those skilled in the art, is entirely unrelated to the claim limitation of a Received line, which has specific meaning in the field of email messaging. A “newline” character, as disclosed in Donaldson, would not contain information useful to identifying the actual source of a nested email message. While Donaldson appears to disclose merely that a message header may include Received lines (col. 4, lines 24-31 of Donaldson), Donaldson does not include any teaching or suggestion of locating the Received lines of components of nested emails, as recited in claims 31 and 40. Miloslavsky does not cure this deficiency of Donaldson. Miloslavsky does not even mention the term “received line.”

Because Miloslavsky and Donaldson, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach every claim limitation recited in claims 31 and 40, the Final Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness against these claims. Therefore, the rejections of claims 31 and 40 should not be sustained.

D. Dependent Claims 32, 41, and 42

The rejections of dependent claims 32, 41, and 42 should not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from independent claims 27 or 37. The rejections of claims 32, 41, and 42 should also not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from intervening claims 31 or 40. In addition, claims 32, 41, and 42 recite independently patentable subject matter that is not taught or suggested in the cited prior art. For example, claims 32 and 41 each recite the claim limitation of validating a source IP address from the Received line. Claim 42 recites the claim limitation of using the Received line to validate an

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IP address of a source of the complaint. As mentioned above, the Received line may be helpful for identifying the source of a nested email message. Each source IP address in the Received line may be validated to help determine the actual source of the related nested email message (see page 11, lines 14-27 of Appellants' specification).

On pages 7 and 8 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies upon the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson to reject claims 32, 41, and 42. In particular, the Examiner cites Figure 3, column 3, lines 39-41, column 4, lines 15-21, and column 4, lines 53-61 of Donaldson to reject these claims (pages 7 and 8 of the Final Office Action). However, these sections of Donaldson are directed to a process for establishing a connection between a sending Message Transfer Agent (MTA) and a receiving mail server for the transmission of email messages, which process is entirely unrelated to using a Received line of a nested email message to validate a source IP address. Thus, the cited sections of Donaldson do not contain any teaching or suggestion of the claim limitation of validating a source IP address from the Received line. In contrast, Donaldson teaches the use of the body of an email to identify a solicitor's contact information because junk mail frequently does not include a recipient's address in the header of the message (col. 4, lines 50-58 of Donaldson). Miloslavsky also fails to teach or suggest the claim limitation of validating a source IP address from the Received line. Again, Miloslavsky does not even mention the term "received line."

Because Miloslavsky and Donaldson, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach every claim limitation recited in claims 32, 41, and 42, the Final Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness against these claims. Therefore, the rejections of claims 32, 41, and 42 should not be sustained.

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E. Dependent Claims 33 and 43

The rejections of dependent claims 33 and 43 should not be sustained because of their dependencies from independent claims 27 and 37, respectively. The rejections of claims 33 and 43 should also not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from intervening claims 31 and 40, respectively, or because of the dependencies of claims 33 and 43 from respective intervening claims 32, 41, and/or 42. In addition, claims 33 and 43 independently recite patentable subject matter that is not taught or suggested in the cited prior art. For example, claims 33 and 43 each recite the claim limitation of a source IP address being validated by locating one or more delimiters in the Received line. The delimiters are useful for validating a source IP address contained in the Received line (see page 11, lines 1-27 of Appellants' specification).

On page 8 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies upon the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson to reject claims 33 and 43. In particular, the Examiner cites Figure 3, column 3, lines 39-41, and col. 4, lines 15-21 of Donaldson to reject these claims. However, these sections of Donaldson are directed to an unrelated process for connecting a sending Message Transfer Agent (MTA) to a receiving mail server for the transmission of email messages. This is entirely different from locating delimiters in the Received line of a nested email message in order to validate a source IP address, as recited in claims 33 and 43. Moreover, the angle brackets disclosed in Donaldson cannot reasonably be relied upon to reject the claim limitation of locating one or more delimiters in the Received line because Donaldson explicitly states that the angled brackets shown in Fig. 3 "do not form a part of the message being transmitted" (see col. 4, lines 22-23 of Donaldson). Thus, the angled brackets of Donaldson do not in any way teach or suggest the delimiters recited in claims 33 and 43. Clearly, the section of Donaldson relied upon by the Examiner does not in any way teach or

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disclose the claim limitation of locating one or more delimiters in the Received line, as recited in claims 33 and 43. Miloslavsky does not cure this deficiency of Donaldson. Again, Miloslavsky does not contain any mention of the term "received line."

Because Miloslavsky and Donaldson, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach every claim limitation recited in claims 33 and 43, the Final Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness against these claims. Therefore, the rejections of claims 33 and 43 should not be sustained.

F. Dependent Claims 34 and 44

The rejections of dependent claims 34 and 44 should not be sustained because of the dependencies of these claims from independent claims 27 and 37, respectively. In addition, claims 34 and 44 recite independently patentable subject matter that is not taught or suggested in the cited prior art. For example, claims 34 and 44 each recite the claim limitation of categorizing a complaint. On page 8 of the Final Office Action, the Examiner relies upon the combination of Miloslavsky and Donaldson to reject claims 34 and 44. In particular, the Examiner cites column 7, lines 31-64 of Donaldson to reject these claims. However, this section of Donaldson merely recites seven categories of known solutions for blocking junk email messages and has nothing to do with categorizing a complaint. Miloslavsky fails to cure this deficiency in Donaldson. Because Miloslavsky and Donaldson, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach every claim limitation recited in claims 34 and 44, the Final Office Action fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness against these claims. Therefore, the rejections of claims 34 and 44 should not be sustained.

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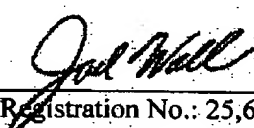
VIII. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the final rejections of the pending claims are improper and should not be sustained. Therefore, a reversal of the final rejections of December 8, 2004 is respectfully requested.

It is believed that a fee of \$500.00 is due with this Appeal Brief. Please charge our Deposit Account No. 07-2347, under Order No. 01-8001, from which the undersigned is authorized to draw, for any fee due with this Appeal Brief. To the extent necessary, a petition for extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made, the fee for which should be charged to the above account.

Dated: June 6, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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IX. Claims Appendix

27. (Previously Presented) A method for parsing nested electronic mail documents over a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving a complaint from a complainant about an incident over the computer network;

parsing the complaint into a plurality of components, wherein the step of parsing includes breaking up an electronic mail message nested in the complaint into the plurality of components;

normalizing one of the plurality of components; and

using an analysis protocol on one of the plurality of components to extract information relating to the complaint.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the parsing step further includes locating a header in one of the plurality of components.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 28, further including the step of locating a header keyword in the header.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 29, wherein the normalizing step includes removing at least one character from the header based on the header keyword.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, further including the step of locating a Received line in one of the plurality of components.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 31, further including the step of validating a source IP address from the Received line.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 32, wherein the source IP address is validated by locating one or more delimiters in the Received line.

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34. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, further including the step of categorizing the complaint into a category.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the extracted information comprises one of a complaint tracking code, a source IP address, a Received Line, a First Line, a URL, and a body of one of the plurality of components.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 35, wherein the extracted information forms a record of a database.

37. (Previously Presented) A method for parsing nested electronic mail documents over a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving a complaint from a complainant about an incident over the computer network;

parsing the complaint into a body and a header, wherein the step of parsing includes breaking up an electronic mail message nested in the complaint into the body and the header of the complaint;

normalizing the body and the header of the complaint; and

extracting specific fields from the body and the header of the complaint using an analysis protocol.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, further including the step of locating a header keyword in the header of the complaint.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 38, further including the step of removing at least one character from the header based on the header keyword.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, further including the step of locating a Received line in one of the plurality of components.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 40, further including the step of validating a source IP address from the Received line.

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42. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 41, further including the step of using the Received line to validate an IP address of a source of the complaint.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 42, wherein the IP address of the source of the complaint is validated by locating one or more delimiters in the Received line.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, further including the step of categorizing the complaint to determine an action based on a category of the complaint.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, wherein the extracted fields comprise one of a complaint tracking code from the header of the complaint, an IP address from the header of the complaint, a Received Line from the header of the complaint, a First Line from the body of the complaint, and a URL from the body of the complaint.

46. (Previously Presented) A system for processing a complaint received over a computer network, comprising:

a message parser adapted to break a message into a plurality of message components, wherein the message comprises an electronic mail message nested in the complaint;

a normalizer for converting at least one of the plurality of message components into a common presentation format associated with that message component; and

an analysis protocol adapted to analyze the plurality of message components by way of the common presentation format.

47. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 46, wherein the analysis protocol further includes an extractor adapted to isolate specific information in the message in accordance with predetermined criteria.

48. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 47, wherein the extractor searches for at least one of an IP address, a domain name, and an electronic mail address.

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49. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 48, wherein the extractor identifies an alphanumeric character associated with the IP address, the domain name or the electronic mail address.

50. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 46, wherein the message components include a header and a body.

51. (Previously Presented) A system for processing a complaint relating to a service disruption over a computer network, comprising:

an organization for providing services for a complainant on a computer network,

wherein the organization retrieves a complaint from the complainant relating to the service disruption and processes the complaint by parsing the complaint into a plurality of components, normalizing the plurality of components, and extracting specific fields from at least one of the plurality of components of the complaint, and

wherein the step of parsing includes breaking up an electronic mail message nested in the complaint into the plurality of components.

52. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 51, wherein one of the specific fields comprises a source IP address.